

VZCZCXRO2251
OO RUEHIK
DE RUEHSM #0064/01 0430840
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 120840Z FEB 10
FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5106
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHPU/AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE PRIORITY 0018
RUEHSJ/AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE PRIORITY 0002
RUEHDG/AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO PRIORITY 0016
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0355

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 STOCKHOLM 000064

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR HAITI EARTHQUAKE TASK FORCE, USAID/W, DCHA/OFDA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: AEMR EAID ECON PGOV PREL PREF HA SW
SUBJECT: SWEDISH RELIEF EXPERTS PRAISE U.S. EFFORTS IN HAITI

REF: A. STOCKHOLM 53
1B. STOCKHOLM 38
1C. STOCKHOLM 21
1D. STOCKHOLM 19
1E. STOCKHOLM 17

STOCKHOLM 0000064 001.2 OF 002

11. (SBU) Summary: On February 8, the Ambassador met with Swedish relief effort experts from government, academia, and civil society to discuss coordination of assistance efforts in Haiti. The Swedes are currently the sixth or seventh largest international donor to emergency relief efforts in Haiti (ref B, C, D, and E) and have sent police officers and prison officials as reinforcements (ref A). The participants praised U.S. relief efforts in Haiti and underscored Swedish support for aid in Haiti in the near-future. However, no long-term bilateral assistance from Sweden will be allocated, according to participants from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). End Summary.

U.S. MILITARY "POLITE AND WELL-DISCIPLINED"

12. (SBU) On February 8, Ambassador Matthew Barzun hosted Swedish relief experts for coffee at the residence to learn about Swedish perspectives on assistance efforts in Haiti. The Ambassador opened the discussion by asking participants to share their opinions of international aid efforts to Haiti in general and U.S. assistance in particular. All of the participants praised U.S. efforts in general, and Swedish National Radio journalist Vladislav Savic, who recently returned from Haiti, told the group that without U.S. assistance at the airport, the entire relief mission would have been a disaster. He added that he was impressed with the performance of the U.S. military, calling the soldiers he encountered "polite and well-disciplined" compared to the UN troops on the scene, many of whom he called "rude and impolite."

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND LEGAL AID

13. (SBU) Michael Lindval, Deputy Director, the Department for Security Policy, Humanitarian and Conflict Issues at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, said that many European colleagues want to portray the Haiti relief effort as "poorly done," and needing "European management to be successful." According to Lindval, this is simply not true. He commented that International Relief Director John Holmes told him that

the U.S.-UN cooperation was working well, and that he was afraid the U.S. would leave Haiti "earlier than it should." Lindval also noted that Haiti will need engagement from the international community for 10-20 years, but he said that Sweden did not have sufficient long-term interests in Haiti to provide such support.

¶4. (SBU) Christian Ahlund, Director of International Legal Assistance Consortium (ILAC), an international legal aid consortium with 11 offices and over 100 employees in Haiti, emphasized the need to quickly rebuild the legal system. He pointed out that the Ministry of Justice was "up and running again out of a container." Ahlund also mentioned that USAID is interested in financing his organization's effort and called for SIDA to provide bridge funding until then.

¶5. (SBU) Karin Rohlin, Regional Team Director for Latin America, SIDA, said that SIDA has no plans for any bilateral aid programs with Haiti because it was not identified as a priority country in SIDA's recent budgetary allocations. When pressed by the Ambassador, Rohlin said that SIDA was likely to provide bridge funding to ILAC, Ahlund's organization. "We will try to include some reconstruction help in our humanitarian assistance," Rohlin said.

A CALL TO ACTION

¶6. (SBU) Mats Lundahl, Stockholm School of Economics Professor and Haiti expert, pointed out that Haiti has been struggling since 1864 to lift itself out of poverty, and that not much has happened. The international community should not expect too much too soon, he opined. With the right effort, he speculated, this disaster might actually be a

STOCKHOLM 00000064 002.2 OF 002

turning point for Haiti if the international community and the Haitians themselves can focus on moving forward and eliminating the "corruption-rife" society that existed before. "But sometimes history can be an obstacle to change," he pointed out.

¶7. (SBU) James Foote, Program Coordinator and Advisor for Humanitarian Action, the Swedish Red Cross, ended the discussion by reminding participants that donors need to ensure that assistance reaches throughout the population and does not get disbursed through political "power games." Foote called for priority assistance to increase government capacity, new housing construction and post-operative care for the estimated 4,000 Haitian amputees. He also encouraged the Haitian diaspora to return to their country to assist in the relief effort. Foote said, "We need to stop flying people out and help them there."

BARZUN